

perpetuated; that the minerals found so abundantly beneath the surface should be so used as to prolong their utility; that the beauty, healthfulness and habitability of our country should be preserved and increased; that sources of national wealth exist for the benefit of the people, and that monopoly thereof should not be tolerated.

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In order to carry into effect those principles a number of public measures are urged, such as the following:

The protection of the source of waters of navigable streams.

The enactment and enforcement of effective laws to prevent the spreading of fire in all forests.

The reasonable but effective public regulation of timber cutting on forest land.

The separation, for purposes of taxation, of the timber from the land on which it grows, and the support and extension of practical forestry.

The preparation, by a commission appointed by the President of the United States, of a comprehensive plan for water way improvement, and the immediate undertaking and continuous prosecution of works clearly necessary under such general plan.

The incorporation into all future grants of water power rights by State or nation, of provisions to secure prompt development.

Payment of reasonable compensation for the benefits granted by the people.

The limitation of all such grants to periods not exceeding fifty years.

Recognition of the right of the appropriate public authorities to make reasonable regulations as to rates and service.

The termination of all existing permits or grants for the development of water power and the substitution of new grants involving the foregoing principles.

The retention by the government of the title to all lands still in public ownership which contain phosphate rock, coal, oil or natural gas, and the development of the same by private enterprise, under conditions that will prevent extortion and waste.

The enactment of appropriate legislation to prolong our coal supply, to reduce waste in mining and to establish efficient safeguards against the loss of life in mines.

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An addendum declares the purpose of the Association "to further all legislation which is wisely designed to diminish sickness, prevent accidents and premature death, and increase the comfort and joy of American life," in the belief "that human efficiency, health and happiness are natural resources quite as important as forests, waters, lands and minerals."

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The British Land Question.

Mr. Asquith, the British Prime Minister, spoke at Birmingham on the 17th in behalf of the budget. The final sentences of his speech, "in which," cables T. P. O'Connor to the Chicago Tribune of the 19th, "bidding defiance to the Peers, Asquith took his place by the side of Lloyd

George and Winston Churchill, who represent the fighting section of the cabinet, will silence the timid section of the Ministers and Liberals who, from the fear of losing their seats or salaries, deprecate any attempt to force the Lords into such a revolutionary course as the rejection of the budget." Mr. O'Connor adds that while "the situation remains where it has been for several weeks," there is "perhaps a bigger expectation that the budget will be accepted" by the Lords.

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The Irish Land Bill.

The "Birrell" Irish land bill introduced in the British Parliament last March by Augustine Birrell, chief secretary for Ireland, passed its final stage in the Commons on the 17th by a vote of 174 to 51. It goes now to the House of Lords.

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Under this bill the landlords would be compelled to sell to tenants as if the land were condemned. The courts would be empowered to fix a fair valuation on the land and the landlord compelled to accept that valuation and dispose of his holdings to his tenants. The Irish leaders are reported as regarding the passage of the bill as a signal victory, and as saying it is the greatest reform the government has yet tried in dealing with the land question in Ireland.

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Convention of German Socialists.

Inadequate and confused newspaper reports from Leipsic indicate that at the annual convention there of the Social Democratic party of Germany, a stronger tendency than usual was shown toward opportunistic policies such as Bernstein (vol. vi, p. 392) represents. The convention adjourned on the 19th, and according to the dispatches the debates had shown that—

the Socialists are growing more willing to accept a programme for the gradual transformation of society through co-operation with the Government and the existing parties. The debate on the course taken by a Socialist member of the Reichstag in voting in favor of an inheritance tax showed that the convention favored this action, whereas the traditional tactics of the Socialist party had been to refuse all possible taxes to the Government as it is now constituted. Herr Bebel, the Socialist leader, astonished his oldest friends in the party by declaring that he had been willing to vote for the inheritance tax, even at its third reading. The convention voted down a resolution which sought to commit the party against any form of co-operation with the Liberals, an action which the Berlin radical organs hail as foreshadowing a Socialist-Liberal alliance.

Whether there is any important significance in these reports cannot be determined with certainty without fuller information and from other sources.